GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
AGRO AND RURAL INDUSTRIES
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:878
ANSWERED ON:24.02.2003
PROBLEM OF COIR INDUSTRY
P. RAJENDRAN

Will the Minister of AGRO AND RURAL INDUSTRIES be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government are aware of the unrest prevailing in the coir sector due to the abolishing of MEP and PPEs;

(b) if so, whether the Government have formulated any plan to reinstate MEP and PPEs;

(c) if so, the details thereof;

(d) whether the Government have any other proposal to deal with the problems faced by workers in the coir industry; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE (INDEPENDENT CHARGE) IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRO AND RURAL INDUSTRIES (SHRI SANJIV PRIYA GAUTAM)

(a): There was a strike in the coir industry in Kerala from the 7th December, 2002 for the implementation of an earlier agreement dated 26th December, 2001 between exporters and small scale manufacturers regarding payment of enhanced price for products. The issue has since been settled between the concerned parties and the strike ended on 30th December, 2002.

(b) & (c): The Ministry of Textiles, after a careful consideration abolished Minimum Export Price (MEP) as a policy measure, for all the coir products from 1.4.2002 and as a consequence the Purchase Price Enforcement Scheme was withdrawn by the Coir Board on 26.4.2002.

(d) & (e): The Coir Industrial Relations Council constituted by the Government of Kerala deals with various labor disputes in the coir sector. Besides, the Coir Board is already implementing the following schemes for mitigating the problems and to improve the working conditions of workers in the Coir sector :

(i) Popularisation of Motorised traditional Ratts to avoid drudgery and to enhance production;

(ii) Training to coir workers under Mahila Coir Yojana and distribution of Motorised ratts at subsidised rates to women coir workers;

(iii) Coir workers personal Accident Insurance Scheme;

(iv) Research and Development in modernization of coir processing machinery to increase productivity; and

(v) Assistance for setting up of Common Facility Centres.